

SOUTHEAST MISSOURIAN

Congratulations to some of my favorite people

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Four of my favorite people received awards recently. Charles Drury received the Rush H. Limbaugh Chamber award for the many achievements and contributions of he and his family to the Greater Cape community.

Jerry Ford was recognized by the state of Missouri for his many contributions to the arts and music to Cape and the State.

Coach Ron Shumate ... "we're with you win or win ..." got a standing ovation when introduced to the fans at the halftime of the competitive Redhawks men's basketball game on his election to the SEMO Hall of Fame.

Also recognized for their selection to the Hall of Fame was John Holcomb (recently deceased) and his widow Judy Holcomb. Dr. John was one of this area's best baseball pitchers and post up basketball players in my high school days, as well as a major donor to SEMO University and the Cape History Museum.

There are some parallels on England voting Brexit (detaching themselves from the European Union) and the recent presidential vote in the U.S.

I found the following article interesting: "Brexit and the Power of Optimism" by Daniel Hannan in the Cato Institute Letter.

"In a way, if Americans want to understand why England voted Leave, go back to your Declaration of Independence, and look at how those ringing phrases apply to our situation: 'a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution ... abolishing the free System of English Laws ... declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us.' All of the reasons, all the grievances that animated your patriot leaders apply equally to us. Let me put it even more simply: you guys voted Leave in 1776. And from where I'm standing, it seems to have worked out OK for you.

It's difficult to begin to describe the imbalance of forces in our recent debate and referendum. Every broadcaster, every political party, every bank, every big corporation, every trade association, every think tank, every EU-funded university, the whole of the establishment was telling us that it was a matter of national survival to stay in the EU. That it would be calamitous for us if we left. And people didn't believe it. On June 23, they politely disregarded all the advice, all the bullying, all the hectoring, all the threats, and they voted to become a self-governing country again.

Let me give you, if I may, two lessons from this. The first is the following: people are almost always wiser than the experts. I realize it can be a lonely and difficult cause to be chanting if you're in the liberty movement here, if you're backing organizations like this, because it does feel that you sometimes have the same line-up that we had in that referendum-with all the broadcasters against you, all the university deans, and so on. But don't underestimate the basic instinctive intelligence of most people. They can smell a racket. They know when people are using self-interested arguments.

Let's just look at what's happened since our vote (for England to leave Brexit). We were told by every economist, by every bank, by every politician, that if we voted Leave, our stock exchange would collapse. In reality, the stock exchange collapse is happening in the Eurozone; British stocks are the best performing in Europe. We were told that unemployment would go through the ceiling. In fact, unemployment has fallen every month since the vote, and is currently at its lowest-ever level. Your president (Obama) said, if you leave don't expect us to talk to you as a commercial partner -- you'll be in the back of the line for any trade talks. He's conspicuously failed to repeat that line since, and the Speaker of the House has quite rightly said: 'We're going to have a trade deal with the UK long before we have one with the EU.' The German finance minister said: 'If you vote Leave, you'll be treated as any other country and we won't have any special arrangements with you.' He now says: 'OH no, no, no, Britain's our biggest customer, of course, we're going to have a good deal.' This is the extent to which the experts were wrong, and the people were right.

But let me make a second point, and it's about the opportunities that we now have. I know that a lot of media here and overseas sold the Brexit vote as being primarily nativist or nostalgic, actuated by fear of foreigners or dislike of immigration. If that had really been our campaign, we would have struggled to get into double figures. If the Leave campaign had really been the way that the Remain side portrays it, we'd have gotten nowhere. The truth is, we fought an upbeat, optimistic, and cheerful campaign based on the idea that ours is a great country that can do better. This was really not the equivalent of supporting Trump's protectionist ideas. As far as I can make out, a big part of his shtick is that he doesn't want a trade deal with China, and a huge part of our referendum is that we do want a trade deal with China, and the EU won't let us have one, because the EU controls our trade policy. Our promise throughout was that outside the EU we would be a more deregulated, lower-tax, more global country. A self-governing entrepot, trading with friends and allies on every continent, including Europe, while living under our own laws.

We now have the opportunity, for the first time in 43 years, to make our own trade deals again, Let me suggest to you and to every other free-market organization in the world: The UK can be the first big economy that opens up right across the board, including in agriculture, textiles, all of the difficult areas that people normally don't like to talk about. And if we do that, we'll have the capacity to raise living standards for the most deprived and most wretched people on the planet -- at no cost to ourselves at all, on the contrary, at huge benefit to ourselves.

Holy Humor

There are times that can do with a little levity.

* A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!"

His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?"

The son replied, "I do know!"

"Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?"

"That's easy, daddy..." the young boy replied excitedly, "It stands for Basic Information Before Leaving Earth."

* There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk.

"Only the 10 Commandments" answered the lady.

* A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: "I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses."

When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation."

* There is the story of a pastor who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets."

* A Sunday School teacher began her lesson with a question, "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?"

A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" said the kindergarten boy.

"Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked.

"You know -- Our Father, who does art in Heaven..."

* A minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump.

"Reverend," said the young man, "I'm so sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip."

The minister chuckled, "I know what you mean. It's the same in my business."

* People want the front of the bus, the back of the church, and the center of attention.

* The minister was preoccupied with thoughts for how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play.

"Here's a copy of the service," he said impatiently. "But you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances."

During the service, the minister paused and said, "Brothers and Sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need \$4,000 more. Any of you who can pledge \$100 or more, please stand up."

At that moment, the substitute organist played "The Star Spangled Banner."

And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!